

Memorandum to the President about Farmers' Anguish and Indignation

Date: 26th June 2021

Shri Ramnath Kovind
President, Republic of India
Rashtrapati Bhawan
New Delhi.

Through: Hon'ble Governor, _____ State/Union Territory

Sub: *Save Agriculture, Save Democracy – Regarding getting 3 anti-farmer laws repealed, and to get a legal guarantee of MSP for farmers*

Respected Sir,

We, the farmers of India, are writing this letter to you, the head of the nation, with deep anguish and indignation. Today on 26th June, upon the completion of seven months of our continuous protests at Delhi's borders, and on the 47th anniversary of Emergency in this country, we are writing to you from all parts of India about the twin challenge of saving our agriculture and saving our democracy.

The Indian society calls us farmers as Annadaatas. In the past 74 years, we put in a lot of hard work as always, and did not leave any stone unturned to make sure that we fulfil our responsibility. When India became independent, we used to feed 33 crore citizens in the country; today, in about the same extent of land, we manage to feed around 140 crore Indians. During the Coronavirus Pandemic, while the other sectors in the economy decelerated and slumped, we achieved record production in agriculture, ensured that our granaries were over-flowing and did so risking our own lives.'

However, in return for this kind of service that we provided to the entire country, the Government of India which runs on your seal of assent, thrust on us three anti-farmer black laws which will destroy our farming as well as our future generations, laws that will snatch agriculture from our hands and hand over to big corporations. Moreover, other swords were also hung on our heads – penalties and jail terms for stubble burning in a new ordinance related to Delhi's air pollution, and subsidy withdrawal through the Electricity Amendments Bill 2020.

The three central farm laws are unconstitutional, because the Union Government has no authority to make legislation in the area of (agricultural) Markets. These legislations are also undemocratic. Before creating such laws, no consultations and dialogues were held with farmers. Without being asked for and without proper reason, these were brought in covertly in the form of Ordinances. The Bills after being tabled

in the Parliament were not sent to Committees for further study and debates. While pushing these Bills in the Parliament, voting by division was not allowed in Rajya Sabha. We had hoped that as the first guardian of our Constitution created by Babasaheb and others, you would refuse to give your assent to such unconstitutional, undemocratic and anti-farmer laws. However, you did not refuse.

You are aware that we are not asking for any charity from the government; we are only asking for just and remunerative returns for our hard work and toil. Because of the enormous exploitation and looting that is done of farmers when it comes to prices for our produce, farming has become an unviable profession for us. We are in deep debt, and in the past 30 years, more than 4 lakh farmers were compelled to take their own lives in a continuing spate of farm suicides. That is the reason why we are demanding that the Minimum Support Price (MSP) has to be fixed using the Swaminathan Commission formula of C2 cost+50%, and that such an MSP has to be guaranteed for all farmers in a legal framework. Instead of fulfilling its promises and commitments on this front, the Government of India started a false jumla around 'doubling farmers' incomes by 2022' which is clearly not being achieved, and made you state the same in your speeches, bringing down the dignity of your esteemed position.

Respected Sir, in the past seven months, to destroy the farmers' agitation, the Government of India broke the principles and rules of democracy in every possible way. To welcome farmers who were moving towards the nation's capital to get their grievances and demands heard and addressed, this government put boulders, sand trucks, barbed fencing and barricades in our way. It dug trenches on the roads and put in nails on the highways. It tear-gassed farmers, water-cannoned them and slapped false cases on them. Several were sent to jail. Instead of listening to the *mann ki baat* of farmers, the government only listened to the lure of staying in power. Dishonest and fake conversations and dialogues were held. The agitation was sought to be destroyed through non-existent farmer unions. The protesting farmers were sometimes labelled as agents, sometimes as terrorists, at other times as Khalistanis or Parasites or Corona Super-spreaders. By manipulating media, there were constant attempts at defaming and denigrating the movement. Those who were raising their voices in support of farmers found that the government was placing curbs on social media to stifle their voices and to even lodge cases against them. Around 520 of our protestors have been martyred so far. Sir, you would have seen and heard about all these things, but you had remained a mute spectator.

In the past seven months, what we witnessed and experienced first hand reminds us of the Emergency period 46 years ago. Today, it is not just the farmers' movement that is facing repression, but the movements of workers, youth & students, women, minority communities, dalits as well as Adivasis. As in the time of the Emergency back then, many true patriots have been put into prisons. Draconian laws like UAPA are being misused against ones who are resisting the authoritarian regime. Media is shrouded in fear and favouritism. Judiciary's freedom is under attack. Human rights are being violated routinely. Without declaring an Emergency, democracy is being throttled

every day. In this context, as the main custodian of our constitutional framework, there is a great responsibility on you, President Sir.

Against this background, today, through this memorandum being submitted to you, we bring to you the anguish and deep anger of crores of farming families of the country. We hope that you will direct the Union Government to immediately accept the legitimate demands of the farmers' movement, repeal the three anti-farmer laws and to enact a law that will guarantee remunerative MSP at C2+50% for all farmers.

Respected President Sir, the historical farmers' movement being led by Samyukt Kisan Morcha is not only a movement to save farming and farmers of the country, but also democracy of our country. We hope that in this sacred mission of ours, we will get your full support because you had taken an oath which is not about saving the government, but an oath to save the Constitution of India.

Jai Kisan, Jai Hind!

We, the People of India, Ones who Feed the Nation and Keep Everyone Alive, the Annadaatas:

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(Samyukt Kisan Morcha)